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NSC BRIEFING 16 February 1955  
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### WORLD REACTIONS TO KREMLIN SHIFTS

I. [ Around the world, first reactions to fall of Malenkov have connected renewed Soviet emphasis on heavy industry with public revelation of Khrushchev's hidden power and with appointment Marshal Zhukov as Minister of Defense. ] Most European opinion anticipates harder Soviet propaganda line on foreign policy and probably an actual hardening of policy itself.

A. UK Foreign Office feels that increased Soviet <sup>d</sup>harness should have favorable results for Western policies.

1. Example: Adenauer's rearmament stand greatly strengthened.

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C. Official French opinion

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emphasizes

personal rivalry: sees no foreign  
policy change.

D. Veteran Foreign Minister Bech (Luxem-  
bourg) calls change good--has "brought  
back to reality" those who believed  
USSR growing more reasonable under  
Malenkov.

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- E. Belgian, Dutch officials see hardening Soviet policy, return to "Stalinism."
  - 1. Foreign Minister Spaak is not alarmed, however, perceiving "nothing really somber."
- F. In Italy, Scelba believes harder Soviet line will help his campaign against Italian Communists.

II. Other free world reactions range from calmness to alarm, even criticism of West.

- A. Turkey ~~has remained calm~~, <sup>considers</sup> noting rise of military figures as significant.
- B. Iranians worried over possible intensification "cold war," apprehensive over status recent border, financial agreements.
- C. Arab press gave front-page play. Consensus: firmer Soviet policy likely,

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Malenkov ouster "to no small extent abetted by the West;" that, if West had met Malenkov half-way, Soviet "moderates" might have prevailed.

E. Nehru promptly announced no change in plans for summer visit Moscow.

1. Nehru described change as "very significant," added: "Generals all over world are anxious avoid war because know what war would mean."

F. Japanese concern limited to possible effect on negotiations "normalize" relations with USSR.

1. Prime Minister Hatoyama remains optimistic.

III. Orbit reaction, on official level, stonily "correct," although clearly surprised.

A. China thusfar has made no comment at all.



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1. First HICOG reports indicate East Germans anticipate harder line: they expect such countermeasures to ratification Paris Accords as conscription for GDR National Armed Forces, sealing of borders to prevent exodus youths.

C. Hungarian public apprehensive; growing fears that end of "new course" imminent.

1. Rumors hint possible unseating of pro-"new course" Premier Nagy.

D. Rumanian press played down Malenkov ouster, stressed Molotov's speech (particularly, atomic destruction of West).

1. Rumanian [redacted]

[redacted] commented: "Means return to black bread for Rumanians after six weeks of white bread for first time since Communists took over."

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IV. As "voice of free Communism," Yugoslav

reactions of special interest.

A. Acting foreign minister said: "negative development."

1. He believes switch might stop or slow down "liberal" changes, which Yugoslavs claim occurring in USSR.

B. Tito's comment: "I think that extremely pessimistic forecasts cannot be made..."

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